YAWL Engine User Manual

Beta – 6 Release

Document Control

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Welcome to YAWL

What is YAWL?

Based on a rigorous analysis of existing workflow management systems and workflow languages, we have developed a new workflow language: YAWL (Yet Another Workflow Language). To identify the differences between the various languages, we have collected a fairly complete set of workflow patterns. Based on these patterns we have evaluated several workflow products and detected considerable differences in expressive power. Languages based on Petri nets perform better when it comes to state-based workflow patterns. However, some patterns (e.g. involving multiple instances, complex synchronizations or non-local withdrawals) are not easy to map onto (high-level) Petri nets. This inspired us to develop a new language by taking Petri nets as a starting point and adding mechanisms to allow for a more direct and intuitive support of the workflow patterns identified.

YAWL can be considered a very powerful workflow language, built upon experiences with languages supported by contemporary workflow management systems. While not a commercial language itself it encompasses these languages, and, in addition, has a formal semantics. Such an approach is in contrast with e.g. WfMC's XPDL which takes commonalities between various languages as a starting point and does not have formal semantics. Its design hopefully allows YAWL to be used for the purposes of the study of expressiveness and interoperability issues.

YAWL Beta 6 now has support for the control-flow, data flow and the resource perspective. In future, for YAWL to be more applicable in the area of web services and Enterprise Application Integration, it is also desirable that support for communication patterns is built-in.

Obtaining the Latest Version of the YAWL Engine

Interested users or developers can download binary and source code files from here:

http://sourceforge.net/projects/yawl

The YAWL Project

For more information and progress on the YAWL project, visit the YAWL Homepage:

http://yawl-system.com

YAWL Architecture

The following image, **Fig.1.**, depicts the interaction between components of the YAWL Engine.

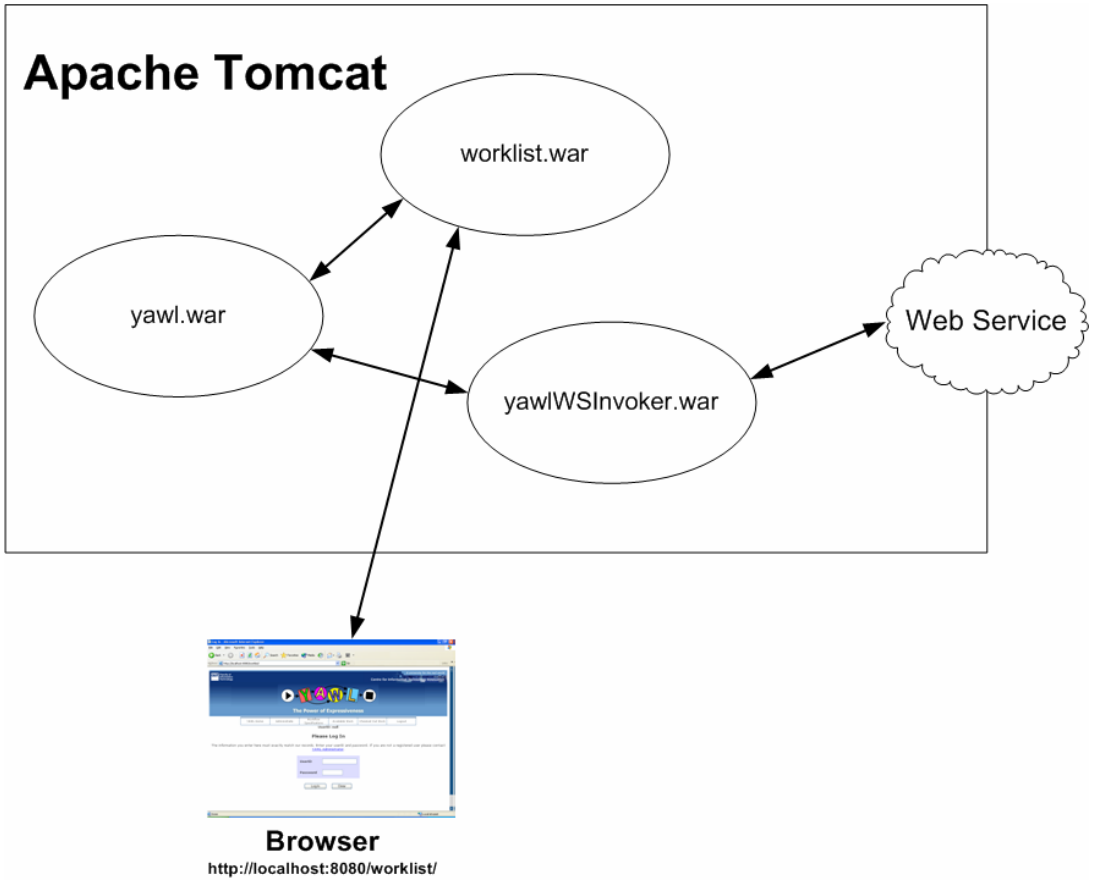

Fig.1. The YAWL Engine Components

Getting Started

Overview

Before you jump straight into the YAWL Engine and start testing your favourite workflows, you will need to make sure that the Tomcat web-service has been started. YAWL is a browser-based web application that requires a server jsp environment, such as Apache Tomcat.

For full instructions on starting the Tomcat service, or obtaining the Apache Tomcat software, please consult the YAWL Installation Manual.

Launching the YAWL Engine

1. Open up your web browser.
2. Type the following address into the address line and press enter (see **Fig.2.**):

   http://localhost:8080/worklist.

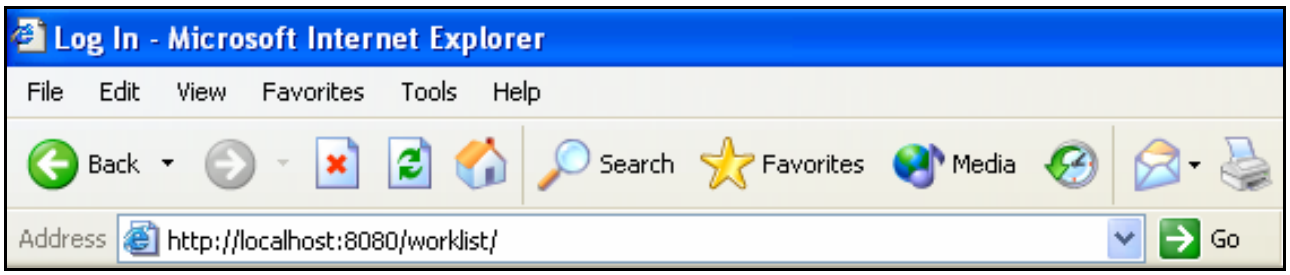

Fig.2. Navigate to the YAWL Log In webpage

3. The YAWL Log In screen will be displayed
4. Log in with the following details:

   UserID: `admin`

   `Password:` `YAWL`

   (case sensitive)

The YAWL Workspace

Key YAWL Pages

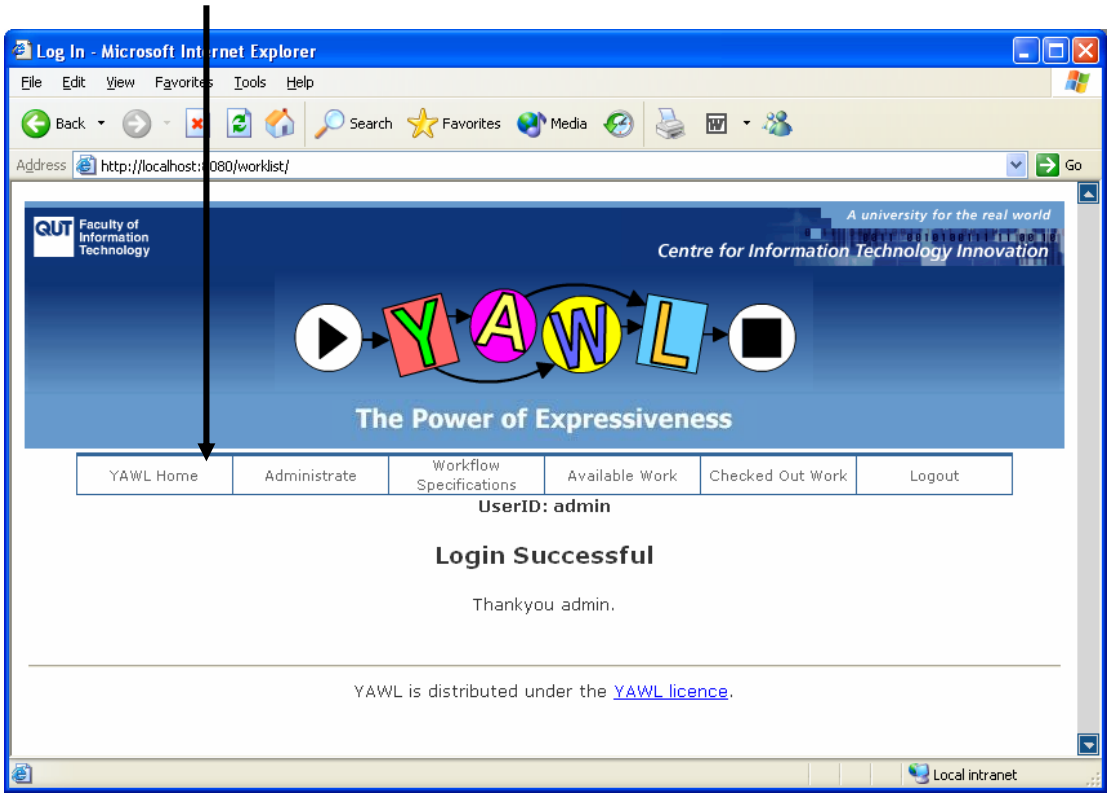

Fig.3. YAWL Workspace

Key YAWL Pages

The separate pages of the browser-based application, representing the different functions of the YAWL Engine:

- YAWL Home
- Administrate
- Workflow Specifications
- Available Work
- Checked Out Work
- Logout

YAWL Administration

Loading a YAWL specification

In additional to a graphical syntax, the YAWL language has an XML syntax. The runtime environment requires this YAWL XML syntax. To load a YAWL specification:

1. Navigate to the Administrate page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/admin.

2. In the Manage Specifications section of the page, Browse for a YAWL specification (.xml file) and choose Open.

   The installation package for YAWL Beta 2 contains a number of sample YAWL specifications (XML files). The specification used throughout this document refers to the "makeTrip3.XML" file.

3. Click on Upload.

4. You should now see the details of your specification. **Fig.4.**

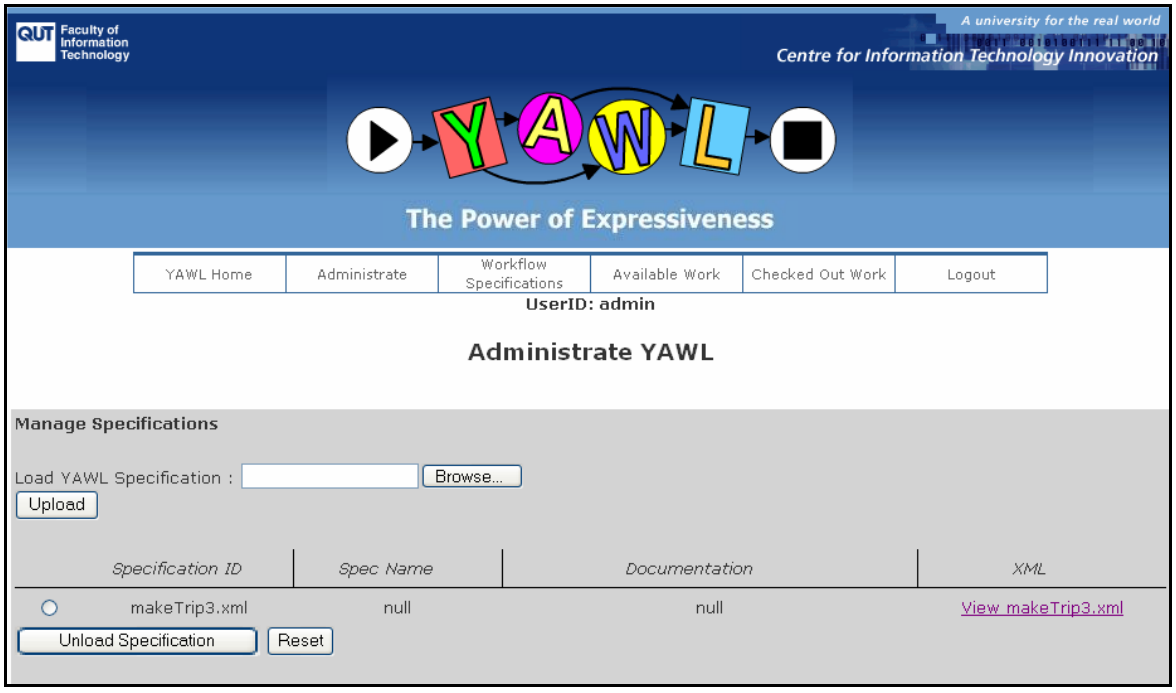

Fig.4. Upload YAWL Specification

Launching a YAWL Specification

In order to kick-off the workflow specification, you need to 'launch a case'. To launch a YAWL specification that has already been uploaded into the YAWL Engine:

1. Navigate to the Workflow Specifications page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/viewSpecifications.

2. In the Active YAWL Specifications section of the page, choose the specification to launch.

3. Click on the Launch Case button. **Fig.5.**

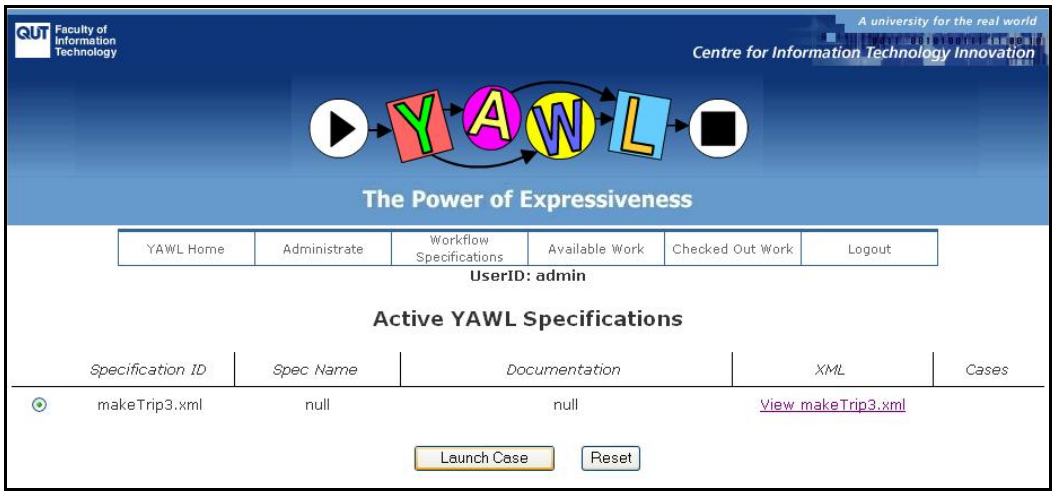

Fig.5. Launching the Case

4. Then in the following Launch Case section of the page, click on the Start Case button. **Fig.6.**

   Depending on the specification loaded, you may be required to launch the case with specific information for data elements. For more information on providing data throughout the case, consult the **Data Elements of a Case** section of this manual.

Fig.6. Starting the Case

5. You will then see a confirmation screen to indicate that a case has been launched with a specific identification number.

Unloading a YAWL Specification

You can remove a YAWL specification so that it is no longer available to be started. To remove a specification:

1. Navigate to the Administrate page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/admin.

2. In the Manage Specifications area of the Content Pane, choose the specification to remove.

3. Click on the Unload Specification button.

Managing Users

Alternate user accesses to the YAWL Engine can be created through the Administrator. To create a new user access:

1. Navigate to the Administrate page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/admin.

2. Click on "Edit Organisational Model"

3. Select "Resources" from the menu on the top

4. To delete a user, choose the user ID from the box "Select Human ResourceID" and press delete

5. To add a user,

   - Choose the "—New User—" item from the box "Select Human ResourceID" and then enter all required details for this user into the fields.
   - Click "update resource"

6. To assign or remove user roles.

   - Assign
     - Select a role from the column on the left hand side.
     - Use the right-pointing arrow to move the selected role to the column on the right hand side.
   - Remove
     - Select a role from the column on the right hand side.

- Use the left-pointing arrow to move the selected role to the column on the left hand side.

- Select Updates roles by resource when complete. The resource is then set to have the roles which are on the list on the right hand side.

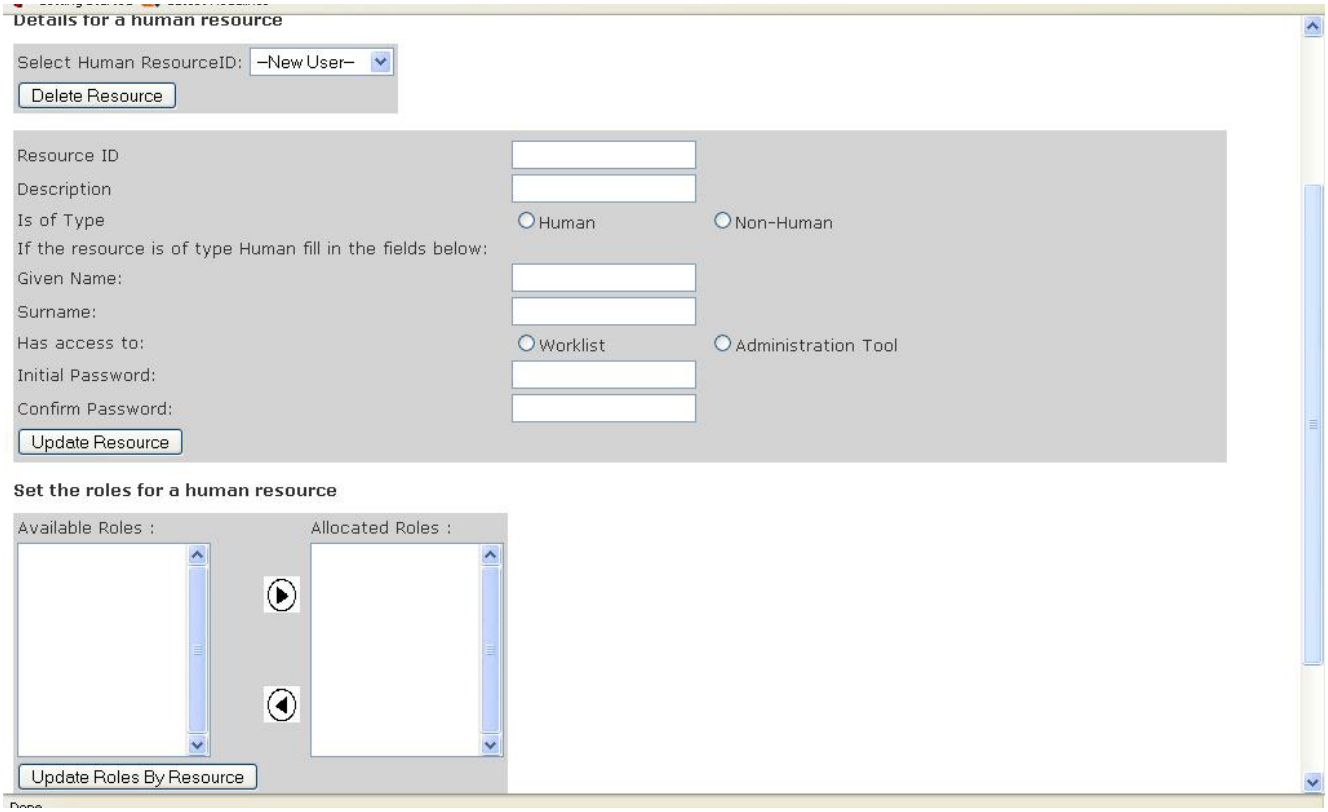

Fig.7. Managing Users

Managing Roles

Alternate user accesses to the YAWL Engine can be created through the Administrator. To create a new user access:

1. Navigate to the Administrate page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/admin.

2. Click on "Edit Organisational Model"

3. Select "Roles" from the menu on the top

To delete a role, select the rolename from the "select role" list, and click delete.

To create a role, enter the rolename in the list at “Role” and click add role.

To assign or delete resources to roles:

- Assign
  - Select a resource from the column on the left hand side.
  - Use the right-pointing arrow to move the selected resource to the column on the right hand side.
- Remove
  - Select a resource from the column on the right hand side.
  - Use the left-pointing arrow to move the selected resource to the column on the left hand side.
- Select Updates resources by role when complete. The role is then allocated to the resources which are on the list on the right hand side.

Fig.8. Managing Roles

Data Elements of a Case

Data Perspective

Although the initial focus of YAWL was on control flow, it has been extended to offer full support for the data perspective. It is possible to define data elements and use them for conditional routing, for the creation of multiple instances, for exchanging information with the environment, etc. Most of the existing workflow management systems use a propriety language for dealing with data. YAWL is one of the few languages that completely relies on XML-based standards like XPath and XQuery.

Providing Data for the Case Using a Form

During certain activities of a YAWL Case, you may be required to provide some information for data elements that have been established in the XML specification. Requests for data can occur when "Launching a Case" or when editing "Checked Out Work" items.

Fig.8. depicts a request for data form for multiple data elements, while performing an edit of a "Checked Out Work" item. The red star next to a field indicates that input is required for that field. The form submits data back to YAWL only when all data in the forms is valid.

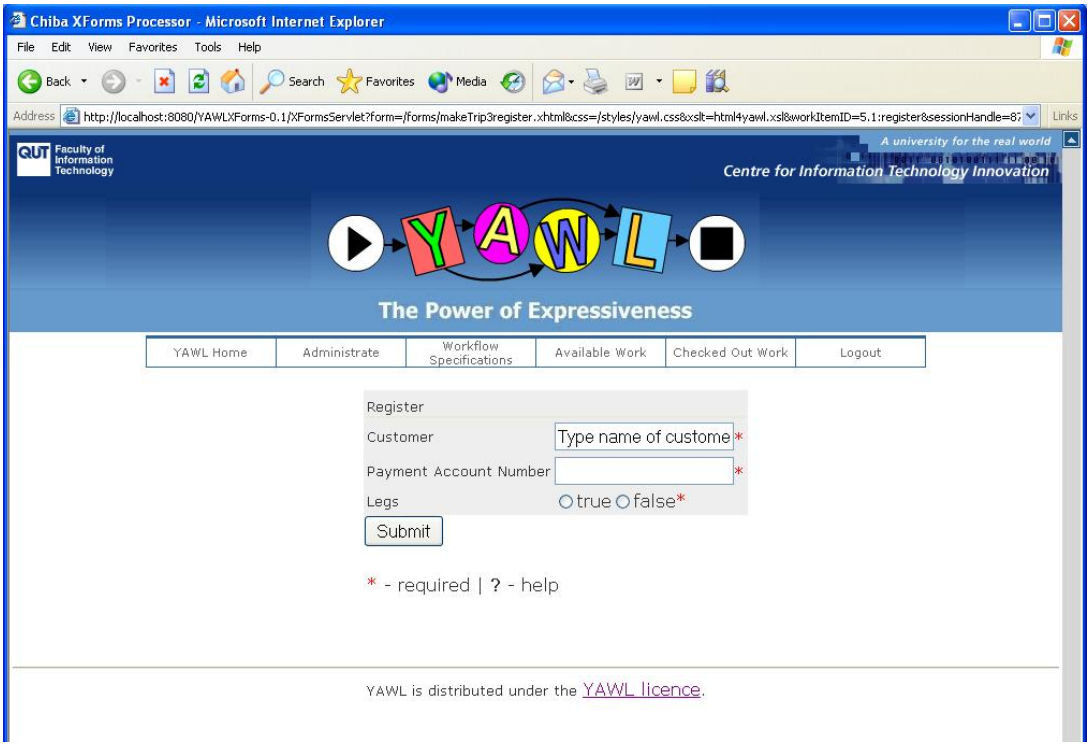

Fig.9. Request for Data using a Form

Providing Data for the Case Using XML

It is also always possible to enter data using XML. This method of user input is useful if data input using a form has failed for any reason. **Fig. 9** is the XML input page. To get to this page *click the link* for the work item ID on the Checked Out Work Items page (**Fig. 12**) instead of selecting the radio button for a Work Item and clicking the Edit Work Item button.

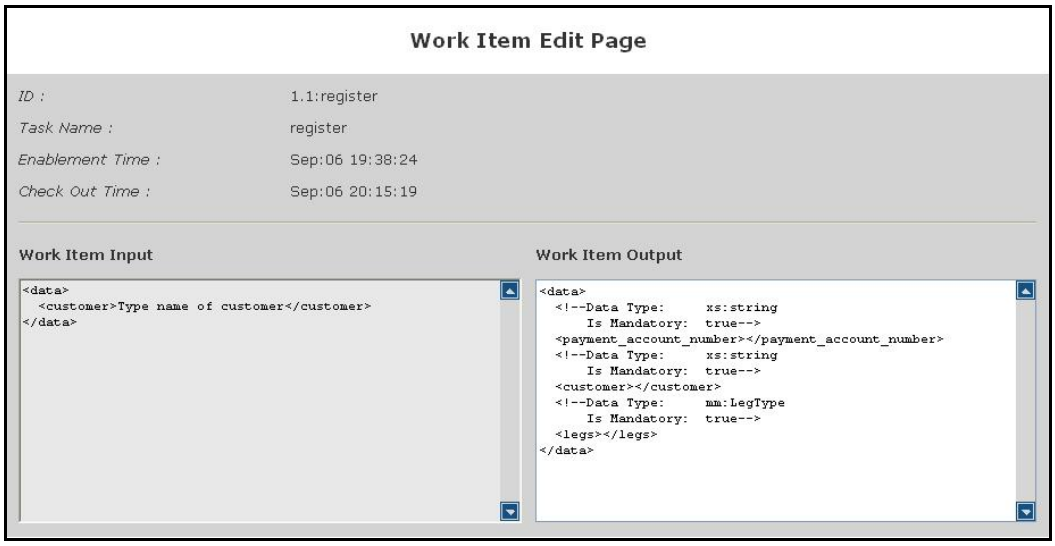

Fig. 10 Request for Data using XML

How to Input the Data Using XML

The structure of the request for data follows the XML format of opening and closing "tags". The data is entered between the open and close tags that refer to that data element.

In the "makeTrip3.xml" specification, the example below (**Fig. 10.**) depicts a request to enter the name of the customer going on a trip, for the `customer` data element.

1. Firstly the **`data`** tag is opened.
2. Then the **`Data Type`** tag (or comments tag) is opened to let the user know the details of the data required.
3. The `Data Type` tag is requesting a **`string`** variable from the user and the information required is Mandatory. The tag is closed.
4. Then the **`customer`** tag is opened, referring to the data element to store the information.
5. The user then enters the **customer name** within the customer tags.
6. Finally the **`data`** tag is closed.

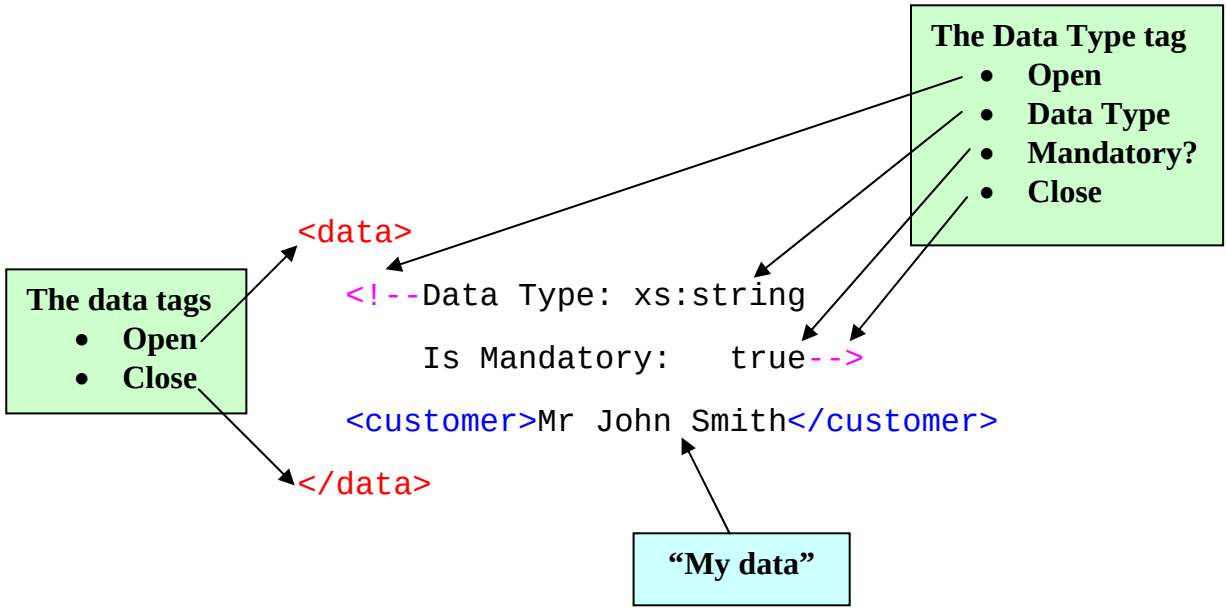

Fig. 11. Inputting the Data

Work Items

Viewing Available Work

Alternate user accesses to the YAWL Engine can be created through the Administrator. To create a new user access:

1. Navigate to the Available Work page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/availableWork.

2. All available work items will be listed, according to the specification loaded. Work items can be related back to a specific instance of a case, through their case number. **Fig.12.**

Fig. 12. Available Work Items

Checking Out Available Work

When a person is ready to start working on an available work item, the item is "Checked Out".

1. Navigate to the Available Work page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/availableWork.

2. Click on the radar button next to the work item and click the button "Check Out"

Saving Detailed Information for a Work Item

While a person is working on an item that has been "Checked Out", specific details may be required to be saved against that item.

Information saved against a work item can be used to launch other YAWL cases or provide data for other interfacing systems. For more information on providing data in work items, consult the **Data Elements of a Case** section of this manual.

1. Navigate to the Checked Out Work page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/checkedOut.

2. Click on the radar button next to the work item and click the button "Edit Work Item" **Fig.13.**

Fig. 13. Checked Out Work Items

3. Enter any required data using a form for the data elements that have been requested, in the Work Item Output section of the page and click Save Work Item. **Fig.14.**

4. Alternatively, click on the link for the Work Item ID to enter any required data for the requested data elements using XML. **Fig. 15.**

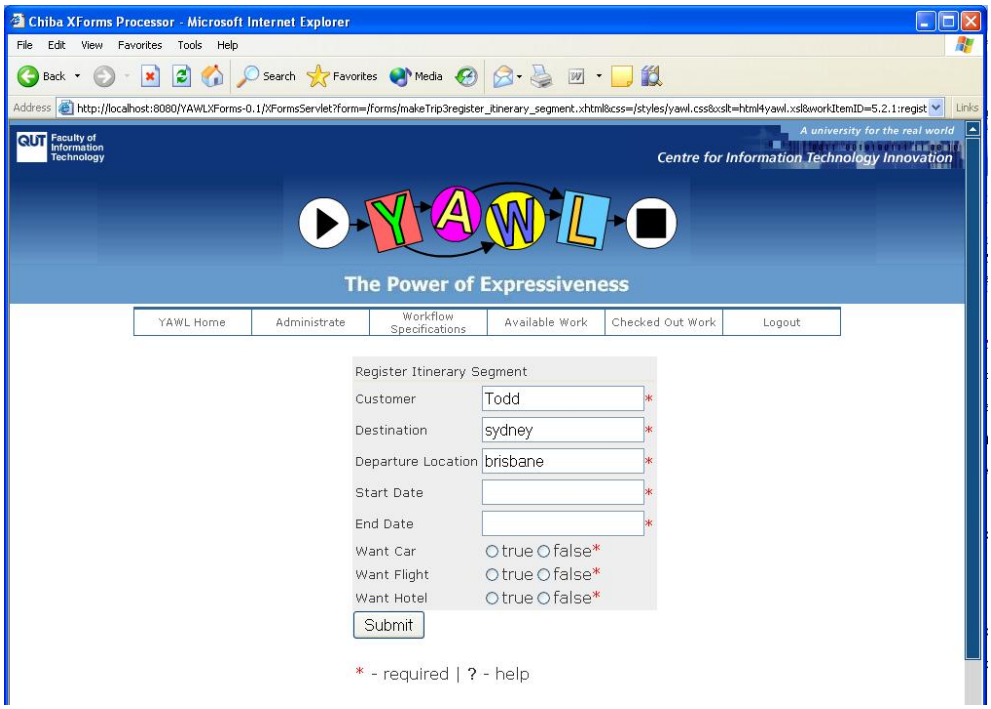

Fig 14. Work Item Edit Page Using a Form

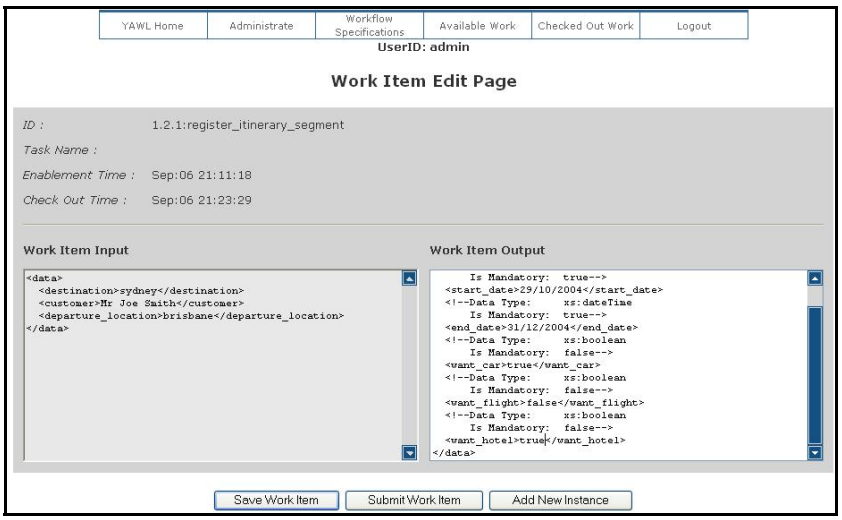

Fig. 15. Work Item Edit Page Using XML

Submitting a Work Item

Once a work item has been completed, it must be submitted for the token to be advanced in the workflow.

1. Navigate to the Checked Out Work page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/checkedOut.

2. Click on the radar button next to the work item and click the button "Edit Work Item" **Fig.13.**

3. Enter any required data for the data elements that have been requested in the Work Item Output section of the page. **Fig.14, 15.**

4. Click on the Submit Work Item button.

Creating a New Instance of a Work Item

If the specification supports it, new instances of a work item can be created as an item is "checked out", reflecting multiple instance tasks in the workflow.

The current example specification, "makeTrip3.xml" does not contain any multiple instance tasks, so instructions below refer to the specification "MakeMusic.XML".

1. Navigate to the Available Work page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/availableWork.

2. Check Out a work item that supports multiple instance creation.

   The "MakeMusic.XML" specification contains a multiple instance task on the work item "Write a Song".

5. Navigate to the Checked Out Work page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/checkedOut.

3. Click on the radar button next to the work item and click the button "Add New Instance" **Fig.13.**

4. Enter any required data for the data elements that have been requested and click on Create Instance. **Fig.16.**

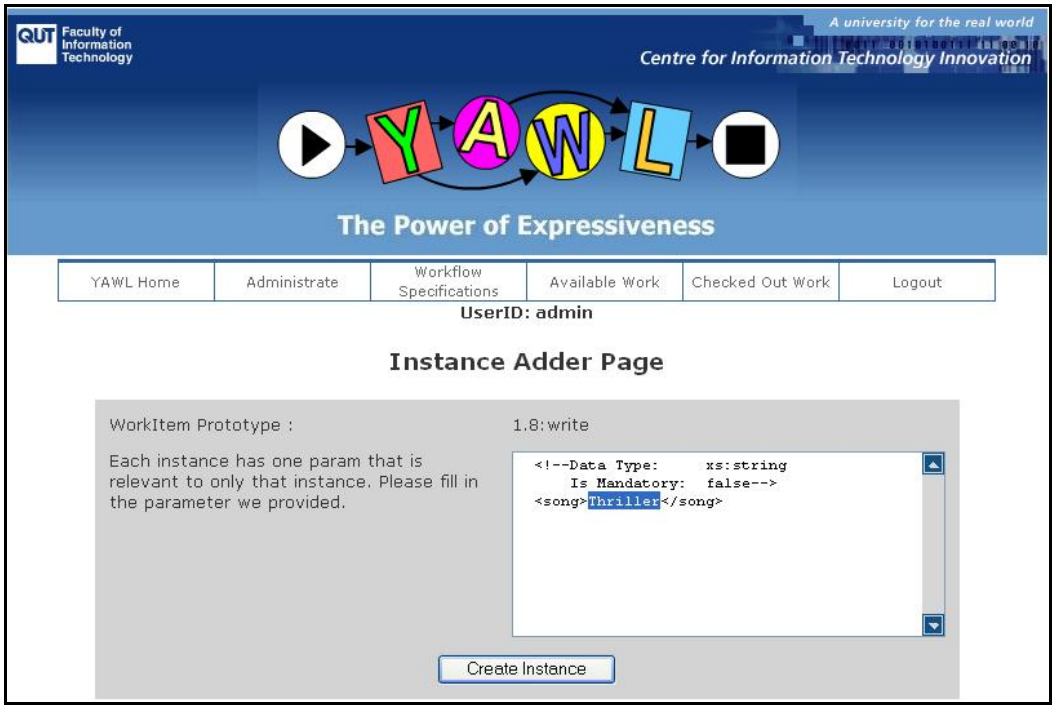

Fig.16. Creating a New Instance of a Work Item

Your new instance of the Work Item will be now be listed as Available Work.

Suspending a Work Item

Work items that have been "checked out" to a person, can be returned to the available work items. All data that has been saved for that work item remains intact.

5. Navigate to the Checked Out Work page:

   http://localhost:8080/worklist/checkedOut.

6. Click on the radar button next to the work item and click the button "Suspend Task" **Fig.13.**

Known Issues

Engine (`yawl.war`)

Web Service Invoker (`wsInvoker.war`)

- The web service invoker does not support sending call back addresses to an asynchronous web service.
- The web service invoker component is not able to invoke web services with complex data types as their parameters.

YAWL XForms Processor (`YAWLXForms.war`)

- All fields seen on the forms are editable. This means that input parameters on a form are editable. Input parameters should not be editable.
- Currently forms cannot be generated for schemas that contain enumerated types.

Troubleshooting

Error in Uploading a Specification

When uploading a specification, the YAWL Engine performs three different sets of validation for the specification. Please check that your specification passes the following three validations:

- Schema Validation
- XML Validation
- YAWL Engine Application Validation.
  This validation is particular to the YAWL application and can represent inconsistencies in the workflow, for example, if a task is defined in the specification but doesn't appear between the input and output condition.

Specification with an identical id.

This error occurs when you are uploading a specification that has already been uploaded into the engine. If you have made changes to the specification and want to upload a newer version, then Unload the existing specification before uploading the newer version.

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